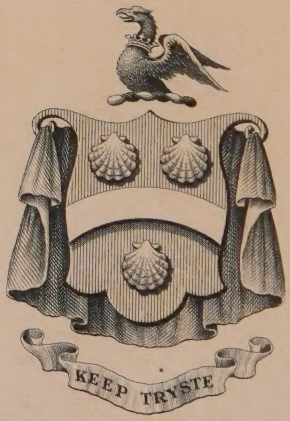
LOVELINESS

ELIZABETH·STVART·PHELPS



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LOVELINESS

LOVELINESS

A Story

BY

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS

" Be my benediction said,
With my hand upon thy head,
Gentle fellow-creature ! "
E. B. BROWNING.

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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For the smoke of their torment ascendeth.

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LOVELINESS.

Loveliness sat on an eider-down cushion embroidered with cherry-colored puppies on a pearl satin cover. The puppies had gold eyes. They were drinking a saucer of green milk. Loveliness wore a new necktie, of cherry, a shade or two brighter than the puppies, and a pearl-gray, or one might call it a silver-gray jacket. He was sitting in the broad window sill, with his head tipped a little, thoughtfully, towards the left side, as the heads of nervous people are said to incline. He was dreamily watching the street, looking for any one of a few friends of his who might pass by, and for the letter-carrier, who was somewhat late.

Loveliness had dark, brilliant eyes, remarkably alert, but reflective when in repose. Part of their charm lay in the fact that one must watch for their best expression; for Loveliness wore bangs. He had a small and delicate nose, not guiltless of an aristocratic tip, with a suspicion of a sniff at the

inferior orders of society. In truth, Loveliness was an aristocrat to the end of his tongue, which curled daintily against his opalescent teeth. At this moment it lay between his teeth, and hung forward as if he held a roseleaf in his lips; and this was the final evidence of his birth and breeding.

For Loveliness was a little dog; a silver Yorkshire, blue of blood and delicately reared, — a tiny creature, the essence of tenderness; set, soul and body, to one only tune. To love and to be beloved, — that was his life. He knew no other, nor up to this time could he conceive of any other; for he was as devotedly beloved as he was passionately loving. His brain was in his heart. In saying this one does not question the quality of the brain, any more than one does in saying a similar thing of a woman. Indeed, considered as an intellect, his was of the highest order known to his race. Loveliness would have been interesting as a psychological study, had he not been absorbing as an affectional occupation. His family and friends often said, "How clever!" but not until after they had said, "How dear he is!" The order of precedence in this summary of character is the most enviable that can be experienced by human beings. But the dog took it as a matter of course.

This little creature loved a number of people on a sliding scale of intimacy, carefully guarded, as the intimacies of the high-born usually are; but one he loved first, most, best of all, and profoundly. I have called him Loveliness because it was the pet name, the "little name," given to him by this person. In point of fact, he answered to a variety of appellations, more or less recognized by society; of these the most lawful and the least agreeable to himself was Mop. It was a disputed point whether this were an ancestral name, or whether he had received it from the dog store, whence he had emerged at the beginning of history, — the shaggiest, scrubbiest, raggedest, wildest little terrier that ever boasted of a high descent.

People of a low type, those whose imagination was bounded by menial similes, or persons of that too ready inclination to the humorous which fails to consider the possible injustice or unkindness that it may involve, had in Mop's infancy found a base pleasure in attaching to him such epithets as window-washer, scrubbing-brush, feather-duster, and footmuff. But these had not adhered. Loveliness had. It bade fair, at the time of our story, to outlive every other name.

The little dog had both friends and acquaintances on the street where the professor lived; and he watched for them from his cushion in the window, hours at a time. There was the cabman, the academic-looking cabman, who was the favorite of the faculty, and who hurrahed and snapped his whip at the Yorkshire as he passed by; there was the newsboy who brought the Sunday papers, and who whistled at Loveliness, and made faces, and called him Mop.

To-day there was a dark-faced man, a stranger, standing across the street, and regarding the professor's house with the unpleasant look of the foreign and ill-natured. This man had eyebrows that met in a straight, black line upon his forehead, and he wore a yellow jersey. The dog threw back his supercilious little head and barked at the yellow jersey severely. But at that moment he saw the carrier, who ran up the steps laughing, and brought a gumdrop in a sealed envelope addressed to Loveliness. There was a large mail that afternoon, including a pile of pamphlets and circulars of the varied description that haunts professors' houses. Kathleen, the parlor maid, — another particular friend of the terrier's — took the mail up to the

study, but dropped one of the pamphlets on the stairs. The dog rebuked her carelessness (after he had given his attention to the carrier's gumdrop) by picking the pamphlet up and bringing it back to the window seat, where he opened and dog-eared it with a literary manner for a while, until suddenly he forgot it altogether, and dropped it on the floor, and sprang, bounding. For the dearest person in the world had called him in a whisper, — "Love-li-ness!" And the dearest face in the world appeared above him and melted into laughing tenderness. "Loveliness! Where 's my *Love*-liness?"

A little girl had come into the room, a girl of between five and six years, but so small that one would scarcely have guessed her to be four, — a beautiful child, but transparent of coloring, and bearing in her delicate face the pathetic patience which only sick children, of all human creatures, ever show. She was exquisitely formed, but one little foot halted and stepped weakly on the thick carpet. Her organs of speech were perfect in mechanism, but often she did not speak quite aloud. Sometimes, on her weaker days, she carried a small crutch. They called her Adah.

She came in without her crutch that afternoon; she was feeling quite strong and happy. The little dog sprang to her heart, and she crooned over him, sitting beside him on the window seat and whispering in her plaintive voice: "Love-li-ness! I can't live wivout you anover *min*ute, Loveliness! I can't *live* wivout you!"

She put her head down on the pearl-gray satin pillow with the cherry puppies, and the dog put his face beside hers. He was kept as sweet and clean as his little mistress, and he had no playfellow except herself, and never went away from home unless at the end of a gray satin ribbon leash. At all events, the two *would* occupy the same pillow, and all idle effort to struggle with this fact had ceased in the household. Loveliness sighed one of the long sighs of perfect content recognized by all owners and lovers of dogs as one of the happiest sounds in this sad world, and laid his cheek to hers quietly. He asked nothing more of life. He had forgotten the world and all that was therein. He looked no longer for the cabman, the newsboy, or the carrier, and the man with the eyebrows had gone away. The universe did not exist; he and she were together. Heaven had happened. The

dog glanced through half-closed, blissful eyes at the yellow hair — "eighteen carats fine" — that fell against his silver bangs. His short ecstatic breath mingled with the gentle breathing of the child. She talked to him in broken rhapsodies. She called him quaint, pet names of her own, — "Dearness" and "Daintiness," "Mopsiness" and "Preciousness," and "Dearest-in-the-World," and who knew what besides? Only the angels who are admitted to the souls of children and the hearts of little dogs could have understood that interview.

No member of the professor's household ever interfered with the attachment between the child and the dog, which was set apart as one of the higher facts in the family life. Indeed, it had its own page of sacred history, which read on this wise: —

When Adah was a walking baby, two and a half years before the time of which we tell, the terrier was in the first proud flush of enthusiasm which an intelligent dog feels in the mastery of little feats and tricks. Of these he had a varied and interesting repertoire. His vocabulary, too, was large. At the date of our story it had reached one hundred and thirty words. It was juvenile and more

limited at the time when the sacred page was written, but still beyond the average canine proficiency. Loveliness had always shown a genius for the English language. He could not speak it, but he tried harder than any other dog I ever knew to do so; and he grew to understand with ease an incredibly large part of the usual conversation of the family. It could never be proved that he followed — or did not follow — the professor of psychology in a discussion on the Critique of Pure Reason; but his mental grasp of ordinary topics was alert and logical. He sneezed when he was cold and wanted a window shut, and barked twice when his delicate china water-cup was empty. When the fire department rang by, or a stove in the house was left on draught too long, and he wished to call attention to the circumstance, he barked four times. Besides the commonplace accomplishments of turning somersaults, being a dead dog, sitting up to beg for things, and shaking hands, Loveliness had some attainments peculiar to himself.

One of these was in itself scientifically interesting. This luxurious, daintily fed little creature, who had never known an hour's want nor any deprivation that he could remember, led by the

blind instinct of starving, savage ancestors skulking in forests where the claw and tooth of every living thing were against every other, conscientiously sought to bury, against future exigencies, any kind of food for which he had no appetite. The remnants of his dog biscuit, his saucer of weak tea, an unpalatable dinner, alike received the treatment given to the bare bone of his forefathers when it was driven into the ground.

Anything served the purpose of the earth, — the rough, wild earth of whose real nature the house pet knew so little. A newspaper, a glove, a handkerchief, a sheet of the professor's manuscript, a hearth brush, or a rug would answer. Drag these laboriously, and push them perseveringly to their places! Cover the saucer or the plate from sight with a solemn persistence that the starving, howling ancestor would have respected! Thus Loveliness recognized the laws of heredity. But the corners of rugs were, and remained, the favorite burying sod.

On that black day when the baby girl had used her white apron by way of blowers before the reluctant nursery fire, the little dog was alone in the room with her. It had so happened.

Suddenly, through the busy house resounded four shrill, staccato barks. In the vocabulary of Loveliness this meant, "Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire!" Borne with them came the terrible cries of the child. When the mother and the nursemaid got to the spot, the baby was ablaze from her white apron to her yellow hair. She was writhing on the floor. The terrier, his own silver locks scorching, and his paws in the flame, was trying to cover his young mistress with the big Persian rug, in itself a load for a collie. He had so far succeeded that the progress of the flames had been checked.

For years the professor speculated on the problems raised by this tremendous incident. Whether the Yorkshire regarded the fire as a superfluity, like a dinner one does not want, — but that was far-fetched. Whether he knew that wool puts out fire, — but that was incredible. Whether this, that, or the other, no man could say, or ever has. Perhaps the intellect of the dog, roused to its utmost by the demand upon his heart, blindly leaped to its most difficult exertion. It was always hard to cover things with rugs. In this extremity one must do the hardest. Or did sheer love teach him to choose, in a moment that might have made a fool

or a lunatic of a man, the only one or two of several processes which could by any means reach the emergency?

At all events, the dog saved the child. And she became henceforth the saint and idol of the family, and he its totem and its hero. The two stood together in one niche above the household altar. It was impossible to separate them. But after that terrible hour little Adah was as she was: frail, uncertain of step, scarred on the pearl of her neck and the rose of her cheek; not with full command of her voice; more nervously deficient than organically defective, — but a perfect being marred. Her father said, "She goeth lame and lovely."

On the afternoon when our story began, the child and the Yorkshire sat cuddled together in the broad window seat for a long time. Blessedness sat with them. Adah talked in low love tones, using a language as incomprehensible to other people as the tongue in which the dog replied to her. They carried on long conversations, broken only by caresses, and by barks of bliss or jets of laughter. The child tired herself with laughing and loving, and the dog watched her; he did not sleep; he silently lapped the fingers of her little hand that lay like a cameo upon the silken cushion.

Some one came in and said in a low voice: "She is tired out. She must have her supper and be put to bed."

Afterwards it was remembered that she clung to Loveliness and cried a little, foolishly; fretting that she did not want her supper, and demanding that the dog should go up to bed with her and be put at once into his basket by her side. This was gently refused.

"You shall see him in the morning," they told her. Kathleen put the little dog down forcibly from the arms of the child, who wailed at the separation. She called back over the balusters: "*Love*-li-ness! Good-by, Loveliness! When we're grown up, we 'll *al*ways be togever, Loveliness!"

The dog barked rebelliously for a few minutes; then sighed, and accepted the situation. He ran back and picked up the pamphlet which Kathleen had dropped, and carried it upstairs to the professor's study, where he laid it on the lowest shelf of the revolving bookcase. The professor glanced at the dog-eared pages and smiled. The pamphlet was one of the innumerable throng issued by some philanthropic society devoted to improving the condition of animals.

When Kathleen came downstairs she found the dog standing at the front door, patiently asking that it might be opened for him. She went down the steps; for it was the rule of the house never to allow the most helpless member of the family at liberty unguarded. The evening was soft, and the maid stood looking idly about. A man in a yellow jersey, and with straight, black eyebrows, was on the other side of the street; but he did not look over. The suburban town was still and pleasant; advancing spring was in the air; no one was passing; only a negro boy lolled on the old-fashioned fence, and shouted: "Hi! Yi! Yi! Look a' dem crows carryin' off a b'iled pertater 'n' a piecer squushed pie!"

Kathleen, for very vacuity of mind, turned to look. Neither potatoes nor squash pie were to be seen careering through the skies; nor, in fact, were there any crows.

"I'll have yez arrested for sarse and slander!" cried Kathleen vigorously.

But the negro boy had disappeared. So had the man in the yellow jersey.

"Where 's me dog?" muttered Kathleen. It was dipping dusk; it was deepening to dark. She

called. Loveliness was an obedient little fellow always; but he did not reply. The maid called again; she examined the front yard and the premises, — slowly, for she was afraid to go in and tell. With the imbecility of the timid and the erring, she took too much time in a fruitless and unintelligent search before she went, trembling, into the house. Kathleen felt that this was the greatest emergency that had occurred since the baby was burned. She went straight to the master's door.

"God have mercy on me, but I 've lost the little dog, sir!"

The professor wheeled around in his study chair.

"There was a nigger and a squashed crow — but indeed I never left the little dog, as you bid me, sir — I never left him for the space of me breath between me lips — and when I draws it in the little dog warn't nowhere. . . . Oh, whatever 'll *she* say? Whatever 'll *she* do? Mother of God, forgive me soul! Who 'll tell *her?*"

Who indeed?

The professor of psychology turned as pale as the paper on which he was about to write his next famous and inexplicable lecture. He pushed by Kathleen and sprang for his hat.

THE MAID STOOD LOOKING IDLY ABOUT

But the child's mother had already run out, bareheaded, into the street, calling the dog as she ran. Nora, the cook, left the dinner to burn, and followed. Kathleen softly shut the nursery door, "So *she* won't hear," and, sobbing, crept downstairs. The family gathered as if under the black wing of an unspeakable tragedy. They scoured the premises and the street, while the professor rang in the police call. But Loveliness was not to be found.

The carrier came by, on his way home after his day's work was over.

"Great Scott!" he cried. "I'd rather have lost a month's pay. Does *she* know?"

The newsboy trotted up, and stopped whistling.

"Hully gee!" he said. "What 'll the little *gell* dew?"

The popular cabman came by; he was driving the president, who let down the window and asked what had happened. The driver uttered a mild and academic oath.

"Me 'n' my horse, we 're at your disposal as soon as me and the president have got to faculty meeting."

But the president of the University of St. George put his long legs out of the carriage, and bowed the professor into it.

"The cab is at your service now," he said anxiously, "and so am I. They can get along without us for a while, to-night. Anything that I can do to help you, Professor Premice, in this — real calamity — How does the child bear it?"

"Poor little kid!" muttered the cabman. "And to think how I used to snap my whip at 'em in the window!"

"An' how I used to bring him candy, contrary to the postal laws!" sighed the carrier. The cab driver and the postman spoke as if the dog and the child were both already dead.

The group broke slowly and sadly at last. The mother and the maids crept tearfully into the house. The professor, the carrier, the newsboy, and the president threw themselves into the matter as if they had been hunting for a lost child. The president deferred his engagement at the faculty meeting for two hours, — which gave about time for a faculty meeting to get under way. The professor and the cab driver and the police ransacked the town till nearly dawn. It began to rain, and the night grew chilly. The carrier went home, looking like a man in the shade of a public calamity. The newsboy ran around in the storm, shadowing all the negro

boys he met, and whistling for Loveliness in dark places where low-bred curs answered him, and yellow mongrels snarled at his soaked heels. But the professor had the worst of it; for when he came in, drenched and tired, in the early morning, a little figure in a lace-trimmed nightgown stood at the head of the stairs, waiting for him.

The professor gave one glance at the child's face, and instinctively covered his own. He could not bear to look at her.

"Papa," said Adah, limping down the stairs, "where is Loveliness? I can't find him! Oh, I *can*not find him! And nobody will tell me where he 's gone to. Papa? I arxpect *you* to tell me 'e trufe. WHERE is my Loveliness?"

. . . . . .

Her mother could not comfort or control her. She clung to her father's heart the remainder of the night; moaning at intervals, then unnaturally and piteously still. The rain dashed on the windows, for the storm increased; the child shrank and shivered.

"He 's *never* been out in 'e rain, Papa! He will be wet — and frightened. Papa, who will give him his little baxet, and cover him up warm? Papa! Papa! who will be *kind* to Loveliness?"

In the broad daylight Adah fell into a short sleep. She woke with a start and a cry, and asked for the dog. "He 'll come home to breakfust," she said, with quivering lip. "Tell Nora to have some sugar on his mush when he comes home."

But Loveliness did not come home to breakfast. The child refused to eat her own. She hurried down and crept to the broad window seat, to watch the street. When she saw the empty gray satin cushion, she flung herself face down with a heart-rending cry.

"Papa! Papa! Papa! I never had a 'fliction before. Oh, Papa, my heart will break itself apart. Papa, can't you know enough to comfort you little girl? I can't *live* wivout my Loveliness. Oh, Papa! Papa!"

. . . . . .

This was in the decline of March. The winds went down, and the rains came on. The snow slid from the streets of the university town, and withdrew into dingy patches about the roots of trees and fences, and in the shady sides of cold back yards. The mud yawned ankle-deep, and dried, and was not, and was dust beneath the foot. Crocuses blazed in the gardens of the faculty, — royal

purple, gold, and wax-white lamps set in the young and vivid grass. The sun let down his mask and looked abroad, and it was April. The newsboy the carrier and the cab-driver laughed for very joy of living. But when they passed the professor's house they did not laugh. It came on to be the heart and glory of the spring, and the warm days melted into May. But the little dog had not been found.

The professor had exhausted hope and ingenuity in the dreary quest. The State, one might say without exaggeration, had been dragged for that tiny dumb thing, — seven pounds' weight of life and tenderness. Money had been poured like love upon the vain endeavor. Rewards of reckless proportion appealed from public places and from public columns to the blank eyes that could not or did not read. The great detective force, whose name is familiar from sea to sea, had supplemented the useless search of the local police and of the city press. And all had equally failed. The "dog banditti" had done their work too well.

Loveliness had sunk out of sight like forgotten suffering in a scene of joy.

In the window seat, propped with white pillows,

"lame and lovely," Adah sat. The empty embroidered gray cushion lay beside her. Sometimes she patted the red puppies softly with one thin little hand; she allowed no one else to touch the cushion.

"Till Loveliness comes home," she said. In the window, silent, pale, and seeing everything, she watched. But Loveliness did not come home.

The pitiful thing was that the child herself was so changed. She had wasted to a little wraith. For some time she had not walked without her crutch. Now she scarcely walked at all. At the first she had sobbed a good deal, in downright childish fashion; then she wept silently; but now she did not cry any more, — she did but watch. Her sight had grown unnaturally keen, like that of pilots; she gazed out of great eyes, bright, and dry, and solemn. Already she had taken on the look of children whose span of time is to be short. She weakened visibly.

At first, her father took her out with him in the cab, so she should feel that she was conducting the search herself. But she had grown too feeble for this exertion. Sometimes, on such drives, she saw cruel sights, — animals suffering at the black tem-

"TILL LOVELINESS COMES HOME"

pers of men or the diabolic jests of boys; and she was hurried home, shivering and sobbing. When night came she would ask for the Yorkshire's bed to be put beside her own, and with trembling fingers would draw up the crimson blankets over the crimson mattress, as if the dog had been between them. Then she would ask the question that haunted her most: —

"Mamma, who will put Loveliness into a little baxet to sleep, and cover him up? Papa, Papa, will they be *kind* to Loveliness?"

Stormy nights and days were always the hardest.

"Will Loveliness be out and get wet? Will he shiver like 'e black dog I saw to-day? Will he have warm milk for his supper? Is there anybody to rub him dry and cuddle my Loveliness?"

To divert the child from her grief proved impossible. They took her somewhere, in the old, idle effort to change the place and help the pain; but she mourned so, "because he might come home, and nobody see him but me," that they brought her back.

The president of the university, who was a dogless and childless man, presented the bereaved household with a mongrel white puppy, purchased

under the amiable impression that it was of a rare, Parisian breed. The distinguished man cherished the ignorant hope of bestowing consolation. But the invalid child, with the sensitiveness of invalid children, refused to look at the puppy, who was returned to his donor, and constituted himself henceforth the tyrant and terror of that scholastic household.

As the weather grew warmer, little Adah failed and sank. It came on to be the bloom of the year, and she no longer left the house.

The carrier and the cab driver lifted their hats in silence now, when they passed the window where the little girl sat, and the newsboy looked up with a sober face, like that of a man. The faculty and the neighbors did not ask, "How is the child?" but always, "Have you heard from the dog?" The doctor began to call daily. He did not shake his head, — no doctor does outside of an old-fashioned story, — and he smiled cheerfully enough inside the house; but when he came out of it, to his carriage, he did not smile. So the spring mellowed, and it was the first of June.

One night, the poor professor sat trying to put into shape an impossible thesis on an incomprehen-

sible subject (it was called The Identity of Identity and Non-Identity), for Commencement delivery in his department. Pulling aside some books of reference that he needed, he dragged to view a pamphlet from the lowest shelf of the revolving bookcase. Then he saw the marks of the Yorkshire's teeth and claws on the pamphlet corners, and, sadly smiling, he opened and read.

The Commencement thesis on The Identity of Identity and Non-Identity was not corrected that night. The professor of psychology sat moulded into his study chair, rigid, with iron lips and clenched hands, and read the pamphlet through, every word, from beginning to end. For the first time in his life, this eminent man, wise in the wisdom of the world of mind, and half educated in the practical affairs of the world of matter, studied for himself the authenticated records of the torments imposed upon dumb animals in the name of science.

As an instructed man, of course this subject was not wholly unfamiliar to him, but it was wholly foreign. Hitherto he had given it polite and indifferent attention, and had gone his ways. Now he read like a man himself bound, without anæsthesia, beneath the knife. Now he read for the child's sake,

with the child's mind, with the child's nerves, and with those of the little helpless thing for whom her life was wasting. He tore from his shelves every volume, every pamphlet that he owned upon the direful subject which that June night opened to his consciousness; and he read until the birds sang.

With brain on fire, he crept, in the brightness of coming day, to his wife's side.

"Tired out, dear?" she asked gently. Then he saw that she too had not slept.

"Adah has such dreams," she explained; "cruel things, — all the same kind."

"About the dog?"

"Always about the dog. I have been sitting up with her. She is — not as strong as — not quite" —

The professor set his teeth when he heard the mother's moan. When she had sunk into broken rest he stole back to his study, and locked out of sight the pamphlet which Loveliness had chewed. So, with the profound and scientific treatises on the subject, arguing and illustrating this way and that (some of these had cuts and photogravures which would haunt the imagination for years), he crowded the whole out of reach. His own brain was reeling with horrors which it would have driven the woman

or the child mad to read. Scenes too ghastly for a strong mind to dwell upon, incidents too fearful for a weak one to conceive, flitted before the sleepless father.

Now the professor began to do strange and secretive things. Unknown to his wife, unsuspected by his fading child, he began to cause the laboratories of the city and its environs to be searched. In the process, curious trades developed themselves to his astonished ignorance: the tricks of boys who supply the material of anguish; the trade of the janitor who sells it to the demonstrator; the trade of the brute who allures his superior, the dog, to the lairs of medical students. Dark arts started to the foreground, like imps around Mephistopheles concealed. From such repellent education the professor came home and took his little girl into his arms, and did not speak, but laid his cheek to hers, and heard the piteous, familiar question, "Papa, did you promise me they 'd be kind to Loveliness?" It was always a whispered question now; for Adah had entirely lost command of her voice, partly from weakness, partly from the old injury to the vocal organs; and this seemed, somehow, to make it the harder to answer her.

So there fell a day when the child in the window, propped by more than the usual pillows, sat watching longer than usual, or more sadly, or more eagerly, — who can say what it was? Or did she look so much more translucent, more pathetic, than on another day? She leaned her cheek on one little wasted hand. Her great eyes commanded the street. She had her pilot's look. Now and then, if a little dog passed, and if he were gray, she started and leaned forward, then sank back faintly. The sight of her would have touched a savage; and one beheld it.

A man in a yellow jersey passed by upon the other side of the street, and glanced over. His straight, black brows contracted, and he looked at the child steadily. As he walked on, it might have been noticed that his brutal head hung to his breast. But he passed, and that cultivated street was clean of him. The carrier met him around the corner, and glanced at him with coldness.

"What 's de matter of de kid yonder, in de winder?" asked the foreigner.

"Dyin'," said the carrier shortly.

"Looks she had — what you call him? — gallopin' consum'tion," observed the man with the eyebrows.

"Gallopin' heartbreak," replied the carrier, pushing by. "There 's a devil layin' round loose outside of hell that stole her dog, — and she a little sickly thing to start with, —— him! There 's fifty men in this town would lynch him inside of ten minutes, if they got a clue to him, —— him to ——!"

That afternoon, when the professor left the house, the newsboy ran up eagerly. "There 's a little nigger wants yez, perfesser, downstreet. He 's in wid the dog robbers, that nigger is. Jes' you arsk him when he see Mop las' time. Take him by the scruff the neck, an' wallop like hell till he tells. Be spry, now, perfesser!"

The professor hurried down the street, fully prepared to obey these directions, and found the negro boy, as he had been told.

"Come along furder," said the boy, looking around uneasily. He spoke a few words in a hoarse whisper.

The blood leaped to the professor's wan cheeks, and back again.

"I 'll show ye for a V," suggested the boy cunningly. "But I won't take no noter hand. Make it cash, an' I 'll show yer. Ye ain't no time to be foolin'," added the gamin. "It 's sot for termorrer

'leven o'clock. He 's down for the biggest show of the term, *he* is. The students is all gwineter go, an' the doctors along of 'em."

. . . . . .

His own university! His own university! The professor repeated the three words, as he dashed into the city with the academic cabman's fastest horse. For weeks his detectives had watched every laboratory within fifty miles. But — his own college! With the density which sometimes submerges a superior intellect, it had never occurred to him that he might find his own dog in the medical school of his own institution. Stupidly he sat gazing at the back of the gamin who slunk beside the aversion of the driver on the box. The professor seemed to himself to be driving through the terms of a false syllogism.

The cabman drew up in a filthy and savage neighborhood, in whose grim purlieus the St. George professors did not take their walks abroad. The negro boy tumbled off the box.

The professor sat, trembling like a woman. The boy went into the tenement, whistling. When he came out he did not whistle. His evil little face had fallen. His arms were empty.

"The critter 's dum gone," he said.

"*Gone?*"

"He 's dum goneter de college. Dey 'se tuk him, sah. Dum dog to go so yairly."

The countenance of the professor blazed with the mingling fires of horror and of hope. The excited driver lashed the St. George horse to foam; in six minutes the cab drew up at the medical school. The passenger ran up the walk like a boy, and dashed into the building. He had never entered it before. He was obliged to inquire his way, like a rustic on a first trip to town. After some delay and difficulty he found the janitor, and, with the assurance of position, stated his case.

But the janitor smiled.

"I will go now — at once — and remove the dog," announced the professor. "In which direction is it? My little girl — There is no time to lose. Which door did you say?"

But now the janitor did not smile. "Excuse me, sir," he said frigidly, "I have no orders to admit strangers." He backed up against a closed door, and stood there stolidly. The professor, burning with human rage, leaned over and shook the door. It was locked.

"Man of darkness!" cried the professor. "You who perpetrate" — Then he collected himself. "Pardon me," he said, with his natural dignity; "I forget that you obey the orders of your chiefs, and that you do not recognize me. I am not accustomed to be refused admittance to the departments of my own university. I am Professor Premice, of the Chair of Mental Philosophy, — Professor Theophrastus Premice." He felt for his cards, but he had used the last one in his wallet.

"You might be, and you might n't," replied the janitor grimly. "I never heard tell of you that I know of. My orders are not to admit, and I do not admit."

"You are unlawfully detaining and torturing my dog!" gasped the professor. "I demand my property at once!"

"We have such a lot of these cases," answered the janitor wearily. "We hain't got your dog. We don't take gentlemen's dogs, nor ladies' pets. And we always etherize. We operate very tenderly. You hain't produced any evidence or authority, and I can't let you in without."

"Be so good," urged the professor, restraining himself by a violent effort, "as to bear my name to

some of the faculty. Say that I am without, and wish to see one of my colleagues on an urgent matter."

"None of 'em 's in just now but the assistant demonstrator," retorted the janitor, without budging. "*He* 's experimenting on a — well, he 's engaged in a very pretty operation just now, and cannot be disturbed. No, sir. You had better not touch the door. I tell you, I do not admit nor permit. Stand back, sir!"

The professor stood back. He might have entered the lecture room by other doors, but he did not know it; and they were not visible from the spot where he stood. He had happened on the laboratory door, and that refused him. He staggered out to his cab, and sank down weakly.

"Drive me to my lawyer!" he cried. "Do not lose a moment — if you love her!"

. . . . . .

It was eleven o'clock of the following morning; a dreamy June day, afloat with color, scent, and warmth, as gentle as the depths of tenderness in the human heart, and as vigorous as its noblest aspirations.

The students of the famous medical school of the

University of St. George were crowding up the flagged walk and the old granite steps of the college; the lecture room was filling; the students chatted and joked profusely, as medical students do, on occasions least productive of amusement to the non-professional observer. There chanced to be some sprays of lily of the valley in a tumbler set upon the window sill of the adjoining physiological laboratory, and the flower seemed to stare at something which it saw within the room. Now and then, through the door connecting with the lecture room, a faint sound penetrated the laughter and conversation of the students, — a sound to hear and never to forget while remembrance rang through the brain, but not to tell of.

The room filled; the demonstrator appeared suddenly, in his fresh, white blouse; the students began to grow quiet. Some one had already locked the door leading from the laboratory to the hallway. The lily in the window looked, and seemed, in the low June wind, to turn its face away.

"Gentlemen," began the operator, "we have before us to-day a demonstration of unusual beauty and interest. It is our intention to study" — here he minutely described the nature of the operation.

"There will be also some collateral demonstrations of more than ordinary value. The material has been carefully selected. It is young and healthy," observed the surgeon. "We have not put the subject under the usual anæsthesia," — he motioned to his assistant, who at this point went into the laboratory, — "because of the importance of some preliminary experiments which were instituted yesterday, and to the perfection of which consciousness is conditional. Gentlemen, you see before you" —

The assistant entered through the laboratory door at this moment, bearing something which he held straight out before him. The students, on tiered and curving benches, looked down from their amphitheatre, lightly, as they had been trained to look.

"It is needless to say," proceeded the lecturer, "that the subject will be mercifully disposed of as soon as the demonstration is completed. And we shall operate with the greatest tenderness, as we always do. Gentlemen, I am reminded of a story" —

The demonstrator indulged in a little persiflage at this point, raising a laugh among the class; he smiled himself; he gestured with the scalpel, which he had selected while he was talking; he made three

or four sinister cuts with it in the air, preparatory cuts, — an awful rehearsal. He held the instrument suspended, thoughtfully.

"The first incision" — he began. "Follow me closely, now. You see — Gentlemen? Gentlemen! Really, I cannot proceed in such a disturbance — What *is* that noise?" With the suspended scalpel in his hand, the demonstrator turned impatiently.

"It 's a row in the corridor," said one of the students. "We hope you won't delay for that, doctor. It 's nothing of any consequence. Please go ahead."

But the locked door of the laboratory shook violently, and rattled in unseen hands. Voices clashed from the outside. The disturbance increased.

"Open! Open the door!" Heavy blows fell upon the panels.

"In the name of humanity, in the name of mercy, open this door!"

"It must be some of those fanatics," said the operator, laying down his instrument. "Where is the janitor? Call him to put a stop to this."

He took up the instrument with an impetuous motion; then laid it irritably down again. The attention of his audience was now concentrated upon the laboratory door, for the confusion had redoubled.

At the same time feet were heard approaching the students' entrance to the lecture room. One of the young men took it upon himself to lock that door also, which was not the custom of the place; but he found no key, and two or three of his classmates joined him in standing against the door, which they barricaded. Their blood was up, — they knew not why; the fighting animal in them leaped at the mysterious intrusion. There was every prospect of a scene unprecedented in the history of the lecture room.

The expected did not happen. It appeared that some unsuccessful effort was made to force this door, but it was not prolonged; then the footsteps retreated down the stairs, and the demand at the laboratory entrance set in again, — this time in a new voice: —

"It is an officer of the court! There is a search-warrant for stolen property! Open in the name of the Law! *Open this door in the name of the Commonwealth!*"

Now the door sank open, was burst open, or was unlocked, — in the excitement, no one knew which or how, — and the professor and the lawyer, the officer and the search-warrant, fell in.

The professor pushed ahead, and strode to the operating table.

There lay the tiny creature, so daintily reared, so passionately beloved; he who had been sheltered in the heart of luxury, like the little daughter of the house herself; he who used never to know a pang that love or luxury could prevent or cure; he who had been the soul of tenderness, and had known only the soul of tenderness. There, stretched, bound, gagged, gasping, doomed to a doom which the readers of this page would forbid this pen to describe, lay the silver Yorkshire, kissing his vivisector's hand.

In the past few months Loveliness had known to the uttermost the matchless misery of the lost dog (for he had been sold and restolen more than once); he had known the miseries of cold, of hunger, of neglect, of homelessness, and other torments of which it is as well not to think; the sufferings which ignorance imposes upon animals. He was about to endure the worst torture of them all, — that reserved by wisdom and power for the dumb, the undefended, and the small.

The officer seized the scalpel which the demonstrator had laid aside, and slashed through the

straps that bound the victim down. When the gag was removed, and the little creature, shorn, sunken, changed, almost unrecognizable, looked up into his master's face, those cruel walls rang to such a cry of more than human anguish and ecstasy as they had never heard before, and never may again.

The operator turned away; he stood in his butcher's blouse and stared through out of the laboratory window, over the head of the lily, which regarded him fixedly. The students grew rapidly quiet. When the professor took Loveliness into his arms, and the Yorkshire, still crying like a human child that had been lost and saved, put up his weak paws around his master's neck and tried to kiss the tears that fell, unashamed, down the cheeks of that eminent man, the lecture room burst into a storm of applause; then fell suddenly still again, as if it felt embarrassed both by its expression and by its silence, and knew not what to do.

"Has the knife touched him — anywhere?" asked the professor, choking.

"No, thank God!" replied the demonstrator, turning around timidly; "and I assure you — our regrets — such a mistake" —

"That will do, doctor," said the professor.

"Gentlemen, let me pass, if you please. I have no time to lose. There is one waiting for this little creature who" —

He did not finish his sentence, but went out from among them. As he passed with the shorn and quivering dog in his arms, the students rose to their feet.

. . . . . .

He stopped the cab a hundred feet away, went across a neighbor's lot, and got into the house by the back door, with the Yorkshire hidden under his coat. The doctor's buggy stood at the curbstone in front. The little girl was so weak that morning — what might not have happened?

The father felt, with a sudden sickness of heart, that time had hardly converged more closely with fate in the operating room than it was narrowing in his own home. The cook shrieked when she saw him come into the kitchen with the half-hidden burden in his arms; and Kathleen ran in, panting.

"Call the doctor," he commanded hoarsely, "and ask him what we shall do."

All the stories that he had ever read about joy that killed blazed through his brain. He dared neither advance nor retreat, but stood in the mid-

dle of the kitchen, stupidly. Then he saw that the quick wit of Kathleen had got ahead of him; for she was on her knees arranging the crimson blankets in the empty basket. Between the three, they gently laid the emaciated and disfigured dog into his own bed. Nora cried into the milk she was warming for the little thing. And the doctor came in while Loveliness feebly drank.

"Wait a minute," he said, turning on his heel. He went back to the room where the child lay among the white pillows, with her hand upon the empty gray satin cushion. Absently she stroked one of the red puppies whose gold eyes gazed forever at the saucer of green milk. She lay with her lashes on her cheeks. It was the first day that she had not watched the street. Her mother, sitting back at the door, was fanning her.

"Adah!" said the doctor cheerily. "We've got something good to tell you. Your father has found — there, there, my child! — yes, your father has found him. He looks a little queer and homesick — guess he's missed you some — and you must n't mind how he looks, for — you see, Adah, we think he has lived with a — with a barber, and got shaved for nothing!" added the doctor stoutly.

The doctor had told his share of professional fibs in his day, like the most of his race; but I hope he was forgiven all the others for this one's merciful and beautiful sake.

"Come, professor!" he called, courageously enough. But his own heart beat as hard as the father's and the mother's, when the professor slowly mounted the stairs with the basket bed and the exhausted dog within it.

"LOVE-*li-ness!*" cried the child. It was the first loud word that she had spoken for months.

Then they lifted the dog and put him in her arms; and they turned away their faces, for the sight of that reunion was all the nerve could bear.

. . . . . .

So it was as it has been, and ever will be, since the beginning to the end of time. Joy, the Angel of Delight and Danger, the most precious and the most perilous of messengers to the heart that loves, came to our two little friends, and might have destroyed, but saved instead.

The child was strong before the dog was; but both convalesced rapidly and sweetly enough. In a week Adah threw away her little crutch. Her lost voice returned, to stay. The pearl and the

THROUGH THE BENDING SHRUBBERY

rose of her soft, invalid skin browned with the summer sun. Peals of laughter and ecstatic barks resounded through the happy house. Little feet and little paws trotted together across the dew-touched lawn. Wonderful neck ribbons, — a new color every day, — tied by eager, small fingers upon the silver-gray throat of the Yorkshire, flashed through the bending shrubbery in pursuit of a little glancing white figure in lawn dresses, with shade hat hanging down her back. The satin cushion with the embroidered puppies was carried out among the blushing weigelia bushes; and the twain lived and loved and played, from day-start to twilight, in the live, midsummer air.

Sometimes she was overheard conversing with the terrier, — long, confidential talks, with which no third person intermeddled.

"Dearness! Daintiness! Loveliness! Did you have a little baxet with blankets while you were away? Preciousness! Did they cut you meat and warm you soup for you, and comfort you? Did they ever let you out to shi-shiver in 'e wet and cold? Tell me, Dearest-in-'e-World! Tell me, Love-li-ness! Tell me all about it. Tell me about 'e barber who shaved you hair so close, — was he *kind* to you?"

When Commencement was over, and the town quiet and a little dull, something of a festive nature was thought good for Adah; and the doctor, who came only as a matter of occasional ceremony now, to see his patient running away from him, proposed a party; for he was not an imaginative man, and could only suggest the conventional.

"Something to take her mind off the dog for a little," he said. "We must avoid anything resembling a fixed idea."

"Love is always a fixed idea," replied the professor of psychology, smiling. "But you may try, doctor."

"I will arx Loveliness," said the child quietly. She ran away with the Yorkshire, and they sat among the reddening weigelia bushes for some time, conversing in low tones. Then they trotted back, laughing and barking.

"Yes, Papa, we 'll have a party. But it must be a *Love*liness party, Mamma. And we 've decided who to arx, and all about it. If you would like to know, I 'll whisper you, for it 's a secret to Loveliness and me, until we think it over."

Merrily she whispered in her mother's bending ear a list of chosen guests. It ran on this wise: —

The family.

The carrier.

Kathleen and Nora.

The newsboy.

The cabman.

The doctor.

Some of the neighbors' little dogs and girls.

Not boys, because they say "Sister boy!" and "Sickum!"

The president's white puppy.

The president.

Nobody else.

Not the barber.

"Here 's ' e invitation," she added with dignity, "and we 'll have a picture of him printed on his puppy cushion at ' e top, Papa."

She put into her father's hand a slip of paper, on which she had laboriously and irregularly printed in pencil the following legend: —

ON SATTERDAY, AFTER NUNE.
IF NOT STORMY.
AT 2 O CLUK.
LOVELINESS
At Home.

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